



Chicora Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 8664, Columbia, SC 29202

June 2009



Monumental Issues

White Monument at Oconee Hill Cemetery Repaired

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Upcoming Talks & Workshops

- South Bend, IN, September 15-17, 2009, NPI Cemetery Preservation 3-day Workshop
- Charleston, WVA, September 21-23, 2009, NPI Cemetery Preservation 3-day Workshop
- For more information, visit http://www.chicora.org/preservation_workshops.htm
- To schedule a workshop in your community call us at 803-787-6910. We have 1-3 days programs.

In 1827, John White emigrated from Ireland to Athens, Georgia, and built the first cotton processing and clothes-manufacturing mill south of the Potomac River. The mill just below Athens was located in an area called Whitehall, now part of the University of Georgia campus. White died in 1888 and soon thereafter a 17 foot tall granite pedestal tomb was erected in his memory. That monument stood for nearly 120 years before it was toppled by a large tree during one of Athens storms.

The Friends of Oconee Hill Cemetery recently contracted with Chicora Foundation to reset the five downed monument sections and two broken urns. The largest portion on the ground weighed over 2,200 pounds, but all required special skill and very careful resetting. Using a local crane company and rigger, Chicora conservators were able to reset the monument in just over a day.



Resetting was also assisted by the availability of a photograph showing the monument shortly after it had been set. Identified by Friends Historian Charlotte Marshall, this photograph provides a rare glimpse of how things used to be done, including a wooden scaffold.

The monument, which includes both polished and dull finished faces with ornate carving, is topped by a draped urn, a common mourning symbol.

Monument rigging requires special skill, as well special pads and techniques to ensure that the stone is not further damaged. Using bits of canvas fire hose, rubber conveyor belt sections, and special nylon endless slings,

it was possible to reset the sections, while ensuring the safety of not only the monument, but also everyone involved in the work.



Before Treatment



After Resetting



During Treatment — the hourglass spindles in the process of being pieced back together

Another Tough Repair

Chicora is used to tackling the tough jobs. Thus, it was nothing out of the ordinary to see conservators Nicole Southerland and Michael Trinkley in a lift, 30 feet above Magnolia Cemetery in Mobile, Alabama.

They were repairing and resetting a badly damaged winged orb and hourglass atop the Robert Williamson monument. Damaged by a lightning strike about a year ago, the Friends organization raised funds to ensure its repair.

The repair began with over 30

fragments of the hourglass base and two spindles that had to be individually drilled and pinned.

Once most of the fragments were together they had to be added to the portion of the hourglass still remaining atop the column — and that required precision drilling.

The most challenging aspect of the work was the wind — in excess of 5 mph at the time of the repair!

Today the monument is again together.



During Treatment

New Hearing Protection Labeling in Works

Stone conservation can produce a lot of noise. The gasoline powered generator can produce about 72 to 83 decibels (dB). An air compressor may produce 70-90 dB and an electric drill may produce over 100 dB. Sometimes several might be operating at once. The OSHA standard (at the employee's ear) is 90 dB — so often some form of noise reduction is necessary. Usually this is a set of ear plugs.

In the past these were labeled with one number indicating the

“noise reduction rating” (NRR) or how much the ear plugs were intended to reduce the noise level.

The EPA, however, is working to better align these NRRs with real-world use of hearing protection. One significant change is likely to be that the single number will be replaced by dual numbers, representing a high-low range. The high value will be possible for 20% of the highly trained and motivated users to obtain; the low value will be possible for the remain-

ing 80% of individually trained users to obtain. Thus, an old NRR of 29 may be replaced by a label indicating a range of 18-32.

Regardless of the change (which probably won't become effective until 2010), correct fitting of ear plugs is crucial. A great brochure to help with this can be found at http://www.hearingconservation.org/docs/Prac_Guide2.pdf.



Earplugs like these can help reduce hearing loss. The new labeling will provide two ratings instead of just one.

Organic Fertilizer for Cemetery Landscapes Made Easier

Organic fertilizers are recommended for cemetery landscapes because they contain significantly lower salt indices compared to inorganic, chemical fertilizers.

The lower salt levels help reduce salt uptake by stones such as marble, limestone, sandstone, and even granite.

Plus, there are benefits of using

organic fertilizer — less pollution, more even feeding, and a reduction in petrochemicals.

In the past the stumbling block has been the need to “formulate” or mix different materials to get an appropriate mix. This was time consuming and expensive.

Fortunately, several companies are marketing bagged organic

fertilizers. Recently on the market is TurfStarr by PlantTech with either 8-0-4 or 12-0-4 formulations. The absence of phosphorus also helps cemeteries comply with new state regulations that may become law in the future.

For additional information, visit www.gemstarr.com/index.php/granular-products

